

Message Text

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62

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-03 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

DRC-01 /072 W

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R 111607Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4833

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR WASHDC

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E.(9. 11652: ADS DECLAS 10/5/74

TAGS: ELAB, MT

SUBJ: LABOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES THREATEN STRIKE

REF: VALLETTA 1703

1. EXECUTVE COUNCIL OF MALTA GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES UNION (MGEU) ISSUED A PRESS RELEASE ON OCTOBER 2 STATING THAT IT HAS UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED "TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NECESSARY TO ENSURE JUSTICE TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. AN ACTION COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SET UP TO MAKE ALL NECESSARY PREPARATIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION WHICH WILL BECOME INEVITABLE UNLESS THE EXISTING DEPLORABLE SITUATION IS IMMEDIATELY REMEDIED. IN THE COURSE OF THE PAST TWO YEARS GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES HAVE HAD TO ENDURE A GENERAL SHABBY TREATMENT, AN UNWARRANTED AND UNJUSTIFIED FREEZE ON PROMOTIONS AND RECRUITMENT, BREACHES OF AGREEMENT ON THE PART OF GOVERNMENT AND AN EVER RISING COST OF LIVING WHICH HAS NOT BEEN MITIGATED BY AN ADEQUATE COST OF LIVING INCREASE. IN FACE OF ALL THIS THE UNION HAS DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS EXERCISED GREAT RESTRAINT. THE STAGE HAS HOWEVER BEEN REACHED WHEN ALL PRUDENCE, PATIENCE AND TOLERANCE HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTED AND THE UNION WOULD BE BETRAYING THE TRUST OF ITS MEMBERS IF IT DID NOT TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION TO LIFT THEM FROM THE INTOLERABLE STATE THEY ARE IN AT PRESENT."

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2. COMMENT: AS INDICATED IN THE REFERENCED MESSAGE, DISCONTENT AMONG GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES HAS BEEN BUILDING UP FOR SOME TIME AND SEEMS TO HAVE PEAKED FOLLOWING THE SUMMER SOLSTICE. IN FACT, THE MGEU

IS SEVERAL WEEKS EARLY THIS YEAR IN THREATENING WIDESPREAD STRIKE ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. LAST YEAR'S CHALLENGE OCCURED AT THE END OF OCTOBER. THE ESTIMATED TWO THOUSAND MEMBERSHIP OF MGEU IS APPROXIMATELY HALF THE SIZE OF THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SECTION OF THE GENERAL WORKERS' UNION, WHICH IN MOST INSTANCES SUPPORTS THE PRESENT MALTA LABOR PARTY ADMINISTRATION. IT IS DOUBTFUL, THEREFORE, THAT THE MGEU COULD BRING THE GOM TO ITS KNEES.
GETZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: UNION GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL, LABOR STRIKES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VALLET02005
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731037/aaaabbik.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: VALLETTA 1703
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Sep-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <21-Nov-2001 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LABOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES THREATEN STRIKE
TAGS: ELAB, MT
To: STATE LAB
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005